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*Hollywood is preparing for another uncertain New Year with the possibility of a strike by actors. The strike could happen before the end of February after a vote by the Screen Actors Guild. Several high profile actors have urged the guild to back-off from industrial action. This report by Peter Bowes:*

The recession and **the prospect of** another strike in Hollywood could combine to make it a miserable New Year for the entertainment business.

The global credit crunch is making it much more difficult for studios to get funding for **big budget pictures**. High earning actors are being asked to lower their expectations and accept **more modest salaries**.

The Screen Actors Guild has said it will ballot its 120,000 members on a possible strike, although it needs a 75 per cent vote in favour before **a walkout** can be authorised by the union's leaders.

The mood of many is that now is not the time **to rock the boat** and that the fight over payments for work on the internet should wait until a later date. Well known actors such as George Clooney and Tom Hanks have **urged** the Guild **to reconsider its strategy**.

The biggest casualty of a fresh round of industrial action, could be the Oscars ceremony. This year the show went ahead, but in **a subdued fashion**. The screenwriters strike, which lasted a 100 days, **sapped the enthusiasm** of Hollywood for the traditional party. But it's an event the studios rely on as **a global shop front** for their movies.

Peter Bowes, BBC, Los Angeles

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>the prospect of</b>	the possibility of
<b>big budget pictures</b>	films that are very expensive to make
<b>more modest salaries</b>	pay that is not so high
<b>a walkout</b>	a strike
<b>to rock the boat</b>	to cause a problem
<b>urged</b>	asked strongly
<b>to reconsider its strategy</b>	to think again and maybe change its plans for dealing with the situation
<b>a subdued fashion</b>	a quiet manner
<b>sapped the enthusiasm</b>	took away people's interest and excitement
<b>a global shop front</b>	an international advertisement

**Read and listen to the story and the vocabulary online:**

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2009/01/090105\\_hollywood.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2009/01/090105_hollywood.shtml)